



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northwest Region
7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Bldg. 1
Seattle, WA 98115

Refer to:
OSB2000-0067

June 28, 2000

Mr. George Fekaris
Federal Highway Administration
Western Federal Lands Highway Division
610 East Fifth Street
Vancouver, Washington 98661-3893

Re: Amendments to the Biological Opinion for the Blaine Road Project

Dear Mr. Fekaris:

This letter amends three errors in the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) April 19, 2000, biological opinion (Opinion) on Oregon Coast (OC) coho salmon for the Blaine Road Improvement Project in Tillamook County near Blaine, Oregon. Amendments to the relevant sections of the Opinion are as follows:

- Page 6, first paragraph, second sentence: "Fish passage into Wake and Hatinger Creeks would be restored, which would allow juvenile OC coho salmon to use these streams for rearing."

The biological assessment, page 24, identifies improvements for downstream migration of cutthroat trout into the Nestucca River but makes no commitment to improving upstream passage for OC coho salmon into these small tributary streams. This is because there are natural barriers to upstream migration shortly upstream from each road crossing. Therefore, it was considered infeasible to provide upstream passage for OC coho salmon and other salmonids. NMFS agrees with this conclusion.

- Page 7, last paragraph, first sentence: "Based on the available information, NMFS has determined that the proposed action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of OC coho salmon or adversely modify *proposed* critical habitat." This sentence should read: "Based on available information, NMFS has determined that the proposed action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of OC coho salmon or adversely modify *designated* critical habitat."
- Page 14, section 3, part d: "The restoration activities will be completed by December 2000."


The date NMFS stated for completion of restoration activities is incorrect. Construction activities are not scheduled to begin until 2002. Restoration activities would occur as various segments of the proposed action are completed. Therefore, it would be 2002



and/or 2003 before all restoration is completed.

These amendments do not change NMFS' conclusion that the subject action is not likely to jeopardize OC coho salmon or adversely modify designated critical habitat. We apologize for any confusion these errors may have caused. If you have any questions, please contact Scott Carlon of my staff in the Oregon State Branch Office at (503) 231-2379.

Sincerely,


For: William Stelle, Jr.
Regional Administrator

cc: Kathleen Adams, Herrera Environmental Consultants